

## PART II – THE ARTIST’S TEAM

### INTRODUCTION

Artistry and economic success are like apples and oranges. The fame and wealth that has been experienced by great artists is rarely due purely to the quality of their art. A good strategy and proper execution is usually the prime component, whether it’s the ability to manipulate the cult of personality (no better exemplified than by Miles Davis), or the strategic manipulations of Irving Mills and Joe Glaser, the notorious managers who successfully brought Ellington and Armstrong (respectively) the unusual luxury of fame and fortune. And empirical evidence proves that the absence of greatness is no problem when replaced by good promotion and management.

But just like Duke and Louis, even Miles needed a team in order to capitalize on his similarly extraordinary combination of personality and artistry. Booking engagements, coordinating schedules, handling contracts, maintaining public relations, making travel arrangements, chasing down money, etc., are all essential activities that are extremely time consuming and enormously distracting to the prime focus of the artist—the art and its creation and performance.

The day of the big time manager and powerful mogul who can single-handedly develop an artist’s career are long gone. For the various reasons stated in *Part I* in addition to the changes of the marketplace and its related technology, a coordination of efforts under a team concept is the most effective means of both artistic and economic success. No artist wants to have to oversee the musical responsibilities of the other members of the ensemble; the consistent goal is for the ensemble to develop a sense of synergy that is self-energizing. The business, its coordination, and the development of future opportunities should take a similar form.

The team concept doesn’t imply uniforms and company logos, nor does it require working in the same place. There are all manners of team concepts, and *Part II* will define and explain the various players who function on the artist’s side of the equation. By learning the roles and responsibilities of these various individuals, along with the different requirements and approaches specific to their jobs, the artist can devise the best combination for his/her particular needs. While I don’t necessarily recommend the artist running the team, it’s essential that he/she be intrinsically involved in defining the goals that the team will be employed to accomplish.

As a manager, my favorite types of clients were those who knew their goals – artistically *and* economically – and who understood the workings of the business well enough to work with me in developing the best strategy for their careers. This not only allowed me to work toward their best interests on every level, but also engendered their trust through the process that I would handle their business efficiently and effectively. It also eliminated the burden of wasting a lot of time explaining my actions to artists that *claimed* to prefer placing their well-being entirely in my hands.

*Part II* examines all of the members of the Artist’s Team, including the Artist. A question/answer format is used extensively in order to best facilitate future reference. However, there is a great deal of criss-crossing of responsibilities among these various roles; and financial realities often demand that all

of the various responsibilities must be shared by a much smaller number of individuals. I've tried my best to avoid redundancy, so I recommend reading through *Part II* in its entirety and then coming back to specific questions as necessary.

The Artist Team members covered here are:

- **Artist**
- **Manager**
- **Agent**
- **Attorney**
- **Road Manager**
- **Record Producer**
- **Audio Engineer**
- **Publicist**
- **Consultants**
- **Grantwriter**
- **Fellow Artists**

There are a few additional team positions in the use of Not-For-Profit Organizations, such as board members, executive directors, fundraisers, etc. Those will be covered in Chapter 1 of *Part IV*.

One thing that will *not* be covered here is the musicians union. This should be decided upon by each of you according to your own scope of activities and personal philosophy. Obviously, I would not advocate breaking ranks with fellow musicians, or violating any proper codes or regulations. I suggest proper research in regard to union rules and practices in making your decisions about how the various unions and local chapters can fit into your plans.

There are specific rules and regulations that come into play when agencies, production companies, record labels and other formal business structures must interact with unions. Unions can also provide certain healthcare, pension and investment opportunities for musicians.

For musicians, I advise checking with member musicians and your local representatives. Become familiar with the various benefits, costs, options, regulations and other pertinent information that goes into making good personal decisions.

For professionals, be aware of any and all legal responsibilities and requirements you may have in regard to unions. Whether you *must* comply with regulations that are not a matter of law is determined by our own sense of professional ethics and ingenuity.

There are many different opinions on interacting with unions. Personally, I've had very little interaction with the musicians union during my career. My feeling has been that the union is not all that concerned about jazz musicians' best interests. Other individuals for whom I have great respect feel differently. This is a personal decision in which I recommend proper research and good judgment. The only

references made in this book regarding unions are in the context of my personal experience and in a very general manner.